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**A
PROPOSITION
FOR
ADVANCEMENT
OF
MORALITIE,**

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*By a new way of En-
tertainment of the
PEOPLE.*



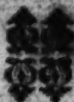
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MUSEUM
FOR
ADVANCEMENT
OF



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Printed in the Year 1794



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A Proposition for advancement of Morality, by a new way of Entertainment of the People.



S 'tis the principal Art of Military Chiefs to make their Armies civil, so is it of Statesmen to civilize the people; by which Governours procure much ease to themselves, and benefit to those that are govern'd:

A

For

For the civilizing of a Nation makes them not effeminate, or too soft for such discipline of war as enables them to affront their Enemies, but takes off that rudeness by which they grow injurious to one another, and impudent towards Authority. And subjects should receive good education from the State, as from vertuous Philosophers, who did anciently with excellent success correct the peoples manners, not by penall Statutes and Prisons, but by Morall Schooles and Heroick Representations at the publick charge; obliging them thus to the Supream Power for their mutual
 quiet,

quiet, without which Life is not a benefit, but punishment from God.

All Nations are sway'd by the Powers that rule in *Religion, Armes and Laws*; but 'tis not amiss to observe how ill the generality of men digest these Three ingredients of Government, by the operations of which the publick health is conserv'd.

Religion hath long had diversity of Rulers, and though they have beene anciently dignified by States, and heard as their Tutors, yet 'tis so far from

A 2 begetting

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begetting our continu'd
quietnesse, that it can hardly
establissh its own peace;
which is wholly to be ex-
cus'd, because the nature of
divine doctrine brings in
things not easily digested
by humane capacity; or per-
haps, the menaces of everlast-
ing torments imprint a stron-
ger sense of fear (the pro-
per disease of weak minds)
then of love, and thereby
beget aversion. And though
with some tempers it finde
a quick and implicit obe-
dience, yet it prevailes slow-
ly upon the wicked and
faithless, because it promi-
seth

seth no earthly recompence,
which obedience doth rea-
sonably expect in this
world.

Armies, whose Leaders
are the Guardians of Em-
pire (for Empire should be
still in Nonage, and ever
growing) are improper to
command belief and con-
formity, because they do
it by compulsion; for the
minde (being of too subtil
a nature to be toucht with
humane force) should be
govern'd by the insinuat-
ions of perswasion; and we
may say, though *Armies* are
obey'd, they are not reve-
renc'd

renc'd, and they rather enforce then command, since no command can be perfectly and prosperously obey'd, without willingness and veneration.

Laws (whose *Enactors* and *Judges* are the peoples civil Guards, defending them from the mischiefs of one another) have not had much success; since old *Lawes*, like the letters they were writ in, becom illegible and out of fashion; and new *Laws* want not only the reverence which Time uses to confer, but even the interest of their *Enactors* is suspected.

New

New Laws are maliciously call'd the projects of necessitous Power, like new Nets spread to intangle us, the old being accounted too many, since most are believ'd to be made for forfeitures; and such letting of blood (though intended by Law-makers for our health) is to the people alwayes out of season: For those that love life with too much passion (and money is the life blood of the people) ever fear a consumption. But be Law-makers as able as Nature, or Experience

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(which is the best Art) can make them; yet, though I will not yeild the wicked to be wiser then the vertuous, I may say, offences are too hard for the Lawes, as some beasts are too wylie for their Hunters; and that vice overcomes virtue, as much as weeds grow faster then medicinable herbs; or rather that sin, like the fruitfull slime of *Nilus*, doth encrease into so many various shapes of Serpents (whose walks and retreats are winding and unknown) that even Justice (the painfull pursuer of mischief) is become

become weary and amaz'd.

If the principall ayds of Government have been accompanied with little success, it follows next we should introduce to strengthen them (still making the people our direct object) some collateral help; which I presume to consist in the improvement of instructive *Morality*; not *speculative Morality*, but that which is active and brought home to the senses.

And we are to consider, that the generality of mankind are solely instructed by their senses, and by immediate

mediate impressions of particular objects, never vexing their heads with reviews and subtle examinations; and are so much the sooner gain'd, by how much the first representations are either more illustrious or more charming; whether this be by the Eye or Eare, wants not its severall effects; it being in the most refin'd and Æthereal Spirits a curiosity and desire of knowledge; in common soules, an abject admiration.: For as great *Buildings*, fair *Pictures*, *Statues*, and *Medals*, intice the *Virtuosi*, so
Triumphs,

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Triumphs, Pageants, Cavalcades, or any thing new, brings the common people about them.

What is hitherto said, infers, that since there hath not been found a perfect meanes to retaine the people in quiet (they being naturally passionate and turbulent, and yet reducible) and that Periwasion must be joyn'd to Force, it can be compass'd no other way then by surprisall of their Eyes and Ears.

The people will ever be unquiet whilst they are ignorant of themselves, and
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unacquainted with those
Engins that scrue them up,
which are their passions,
in true characters of the
beauties and deformities of
vertue and vice. For com-
monly *Divinity* speaks in
abstractions and high The-
ories above their under-
standing, and seldome de-
scends to those usefull parts
which are necessary to be
learnt; Supposing perhaps
that our first Tutors (which
are Parents and Gramma-
rians) have prevented the
Pulpit in documents of
this plaine and easie Na-
ture; but *Morality* (espe-
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cially that which is need-
full to direct our behavi-
our in publick) can hard-
ly be taught by unpractis'd
persons, as being onely to
be learn'd from such singu-
lar understandings as have
been experienc'd in variety
of men and affairs.

By these omisions the
clouds of common mindes
continue undisperst, and
breed dispair of knowledg,
which begets aversion, and
aversion begets open defe-
ction; but if the peoples
senses were charm'd and
entertain'd with things fa-
miliar to them, they would
easily

easily follow the voices of
 their shepherds; especially if
 there were set up some En-
 tertainment , where their
 Eyes might be subdu'd
 with *Heroicall Pictures* and
 change of *Scenes* , their
 Eares civiliz'd with Musick
 and wholesome discourses,
 by some *Academie* where may
 be presented in a Theater
 severall ingenious *Mecha-*
nicks, as *Motion* and *Transposi-*
tion of Lights, to make a more
 naturall resemblance of
 the great and vertuous Acti-
 ons of such as are eminent
 in Story ; without any scan-
 dalous disguising of men in
 womens

es of womens habits, as have bin
 ally if us'd in Playes ; the former
 e En- would not onely divert the
 their people from disorder , but
 du'd by degrees enamour them
 and with consideration of the
 their conveniencies and protecti-
 usick ons of Government. This
 rses, the wise *Athenians* knew; who
 may dividing into three parts the
 eater Publick Revenew, expend-
 echa- ed one in Shows to divert
 posi- the people from meeting to
 more consult of their Rulers me-
 of rit and the defects of Go-
 cti- vernment ; and the *Romans*
 ment had not long continu'd
 can- their Empire, but for the
 n in same diversion at a vaster
 mens charge.

Musick

and Musick hath so strong Sympathy with good mindes, that (as *Plato* saies) he cannot be vertuous that loves it not. The wonders it can produce may be imagined by the two Fictions of *Orpheus* and *Amphion*; the one by his musick civilizing a rude people; the other by the sound of his Harp making pleasant their toyles who built up the walls of *Thebes*. But why should we descend to instance Fictions when we may take notice of the great effects that *David's* Harp wrought upon *Saul*?

Abilul

Discourses

Discourses are of excellent advantage to those that want experience; we mean not intellectuall School disquisitions, but smart reflections upon manners, which make reason familiar with Sense, and inforce the gravest and most considerable Truths from the smallest and most domestique hints; which is not meere Poetry; but a pleasant mixture of it with verbal painting; and was the way our Saviour took to convey his Doctrine into the mindes of his Auditors; for, *Without a Parable spake*

^{to} he not them ; In this way did
 Solomon declare the mysti-
 call love of *Christ* to his
 Church, and (if it be
 lawfull to joyne any Eth-
 nick Record to sacred Sto-
 ry) we may mention that
 by this Meanes *Demosthenes*
 and *Menenius Agrippa* (the
 one with the tale of Wolves
 and Sheep, the other with
 that of the belly and limbs)
 did pleasantly proeure their
 Countreys safety. But this
 is Poetry in an home and
 countrey dresse ; He has
 also her States and magnifi-
 cencies, her wraths and fa-
 miliarities ; and there is no
 degree

degree of life which she cannot teach.

To work these to the best advantage, and make their touches strengths and heights, not only for delight but instruction, there can be no better way then by bringing all into the channell of *Morality*; for the scandalous and extravagant parts being cut off, there will remaine an entire body, full of grace and proportion, able to allure and overcome the variety of Spectators: This will be the great commander of mindes, and like *Hercules*

in the Embleme draw all by
the Eares.

We may then infer, that
no designe can promise it
selfe fairer successe upon
the people then if an *Academy* or *Schoole of Morality*
were set up; where severall
Scenes and Representa-
tions to the Eye, severall
speeches and entertain-
ments to the Minde, might
court even the courtest of
the people into goodnesse,
for though vertue must
needs be transcendently a-
miable, yet since her beames
are too dazeling for the
Eyes of the vulgar, her
meaner

meaner approaches, through the disguises of morall Poetry and other Arts, lessen her into a due proportion to their sight.

The chiefest objects represented, should be those famous Battels at Land and Sea by which this Nation is renown'd; presenting the Generals and other meritorious Leaders in their conduct, Dangers, Successes, and Triumphs; and the interlocution, between the changing of the *Scenes*, should be in praise of Valor, Vigilance, Military Painfulness, Tem-

B 3 perance

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perance, and Obedience to
Authority; which will not,
like the softer arguments
of Playes, make the peo-
ple effeminate, but warme
and incite them to Heroi-
call Attempts, when the
State shall command them;
and bring into derision the
present Vices and Luxury.

But perhaps the devoti-
on of some (which with all
meeknes and civility should
be satisfi'd) may except a-
gainst this way of teaching
the people, as if it were new,
or that the doctrine of *Mora-*
lity were not needfull where
that of *faith* is freely preacht.

But

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But this kinde of repre-
sentation (consisting partly
in the variety of objects by
the change of *Scenes*, like
Historicall Painting) is no
other then that of *Pa-
rables*, unlessse this be made
more lively then if it were
deliver'd meerly by dis-
course: and is not new;
for by *Parables* in Morall
Fictions the Prophets of
old did often teach; and
likewise by that way our
Saviour hath oftneft taught;
and *Morality* was not only
the onely theame of the
Prophets, but was also half
that great precept in which

our Saviour contracted his whole Doctrine ; which was divided between our manners or behaviour towards one another (which is *Morality*) and our Piety towards God.

Others may object, that recreations though never so innocent, are a losse of time to the people in giving them too great a diversion of pleasure.

To this I reply, that whosoever in Government endeavors to make the people serious and grave (which are attributes that may become the peoples
Re-

Representatives, but not
 the people) doth practice
 a new way to enlarge the
 State, by making every Sub-
 ject a States-man ; and he
 that meanes to govern so
 sadly (as it were without
 any Musick in his Domi-
 nion) must lay but light
 burdens on his Subjects ;
 or else he observes not the
 ordinary wisdom of those,
 who to their beasts that are
 much Laden whistle all
 day to encourage their tra-
 velt. For that Supream
 Power which expects a
 firme obedience in those
 who are not us'd to rejoy-
 cing,

cing, but live mournfully,
as if they were still prepa-
ring for the funerall of
peace , hath err'd in con-
triving the lastingnesse of
Government , which is the
principall work of Art ;
and lesse hath that Power
consider'd Nature, as if such
new austerity did seeme to
tax even her for want of
gravity in bringing in the
spring merrily, with a mu-
sicall variety of birds. And
tis requisite to observe that
battells (the most solemn
and serious businesse of
Death) are begun with
Trumpets and Fifes, and an-
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ally, sufficiently were continued with
 more diversity of Musick;
 of and that the *Grecian* Laws
 on- (Lawes being the gravest
 of endeavor of humane coun-
 the cells for the ease of life)
 rt; were long before the dayes
 ver of *Lycurgus* (to make them
 uch more pleasant to memory)
 to publisht in verse.

Others may object that
 the these Presentments, by
 nu- drawing too great a con-
 And course, might endanger the
 that publick Peace; which is
 mn a jealousie that sutes not
 of with the dignity and cou-
 with rage of a State, and may
 an- render its growth and
 ntly strength

strength suspected : But we will answer this objection with a plaine question : How is it possible an Assembly that is not more numerous then any one of a hundred (which are in each parish of the City every Sabbath) can in any kinde affront the Military Power ?

It should not be forgotten, that as the way we have propos'd, is the most probable of evincing the necessity of vertue unto vulgar mindes, so is it the most likely to containe them in quiet : severall religions teach contrariety, or con-

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traditions, and by pervert-
 ed principles often lead the
 people into cōmotions; but
 their mindes will be more
 tractable and sooner instru-
 cted, when the wayes to sa-
 cred Religion (which are
 rough and shadie) be made
 more plaine and passable
 by the footsteps of her ush-
 er, *Morality*; and *Morality*,
 as it is still the same, so
 is it faithfull to the same
 ends, and excludes debates;
 which too often attend the
 remote, and undiscernable
 purenesse of *Divinity*; But
 this would not onely divert
 the people from suspicious
 thoughts

thoughts of their Govern-
 nors (which is commonly
 the first effect of their idlene-
 nesse) but also ease them in
 the midst of their burdens,
 and make them believe they
 have peace round about
 them; whereas the sound
 of Trumpets and clashing
 of Armes, when no such
 Entertainments are made
 for diversion, puts them
 into jealousies, and makes
 them apt for commotion;
 and though it may seeme
 presumption to note so
 much, yet wil it not be amiss
 to say, that even the wisest
 Governors have held it con-
 venient

over-venient thus to divert the
 only people; and that there is not
 idle an easier means to bring them
 in in to the thought and love of
 ens, publick Tranquility.

they It is also propos'd (since
 bout it may be conceiv'd such a
 and work will bring some pro-
 hing fit to the undertakers) that
 such out of the product the State
 made would accept of the main-
 them tenance of Fifty main'd
 takes Soldiers; which is more
 on; then at most any Hospitall
 eme of this Island does support.

fo These things are spoken to
 nifs the rationall and ingeni-
 left ous; therefore we may bold-
 on- ly hope this tender will be
 ent receiv'd

receiv'd with the same affection and readinesse, as good Governors use to ascertain Propositions for the advantage of the people, and such as in any little kinde improve the publick Revenue. And since this comes from sincerity in the undertakers, and will conduce to the common benefit and quiet, we cannot (in such a concurrence of promising circumstances) doubt of the successe.

F I N I S.

**MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM**

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